WORDS OF RECONCILIATION.

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GREETING.

We send out with this number a Christian greeting to all our readers, and especially to those subscribers and friends who have shown by word and deed their sympathy with the object of this magazine. We invoke God's blessing upon them all through the coming year. It gives us joy to know that, even though the number be small, it is a growing one, who have come to believe in the gospel of the resurrection. Let such be assured that the little one shall become a thousand. The doctrine we are teaching is to be the theology of the future. Too long has the face of our Father God been obscured and masked from the world by a theology that shut out the great mass of His creatures from His purpose of love in the redemption of mankind, except perhaps that portion of them whom in pity He killed off in infancy or shut up from responsibility in idiocy. The spirit of God in the Church is tearing off this dark veil everywhere, and His children of every name are beginning to see that He sent His Son to be the Saviour of the *world*. All are to be saved from the death—race-penalty which has passed upon all men. This does not imply that any man shall attain eternal life except as he has moral fitness for it, or that men may not, after recovery to another

life, fall into the second death; but it does secure to all an opportunity to know God in Christ, and so to be forever blessed.

This "hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust" is an essential part of the *gospel,* without which it cannot be glad tidings of great joy to all people. It has been our mission, amid discouragement and reproach, to hold forth this "word of life." And we are sure that we who have had fellowship in this seed-sowing shall rejoice together in a harvest of blessing to the church and of honor to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the day when His true glory as the Saviour of mankind is revealed.

In our zeal for this gospel of the resurrection, let not our friends think that we have forgotten the main purpose of this magazine—to aid in the work of reconciling the incomplete and jarring forms of faith which have brought confusion and weakness into the one church of the one Lord. We are increasingly convinced that these arise mainly from that incomplete view of His work of redemption which strips His resurrection of its true efficacy and glory. Until men can agree as to the nature and scope of this prime verity of the faith, there is no prospect of a united church. We must know the goal toward which all the lines in God's plan of grace converge, or we shall continue to walk in diverse and bewildering paths. We are sure that we are laboring most effectively for this object for which we toil and pray—the union in one fold of all who are in Christ—by this continual striking at the radical cause of disunion, which is the failure of the church to grasp the true purpose of God in redeeming mankind from

death through the gift of Christ who died and rose again, and so to understand her own relation to this plan as the chosen first fruits in the great life-harvest, and her priestly place in the fulfilment of God's great purpose to redeem from death all the families of the earth.

To all then who have fellowship with us in proclaiming this gospel of the resurrection of the dead, we send out a word of cheer and of hope. Let us not be discouraged by the day of small things. It is a little flock to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom.

PROGRESS.

The publisher of a magazine like this has one advantage over the writer of books. Larger room is left to him for growth in the knowledge of the truth and freer opportunity in the expression of it. This is one satisfaction we have in continuing this publication. Since it began we are conscious of having come to a clearer apprehension of the truth upon the points to which we have given special attention, and at some points to have made advances. We have high authority for the statement that all our knowledge of the truth is yet, but partial. "For now we know in part and prophesy in part." "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." (1 Cor. viii, 2; xiii, 9). St. Paul seems in these passages to disclaim for himself final and absolute knowledge of the things upon which he prophesied. We may well therefore hold ourselves open to that fuller light and instruction which are promised to those who humbly seek it.

Some of the points upon which our readers may have

noticed progress in these pages, and upon which we hope for increasing light, are,

1. In a larger view of the prophecies concerning Christ's second coming.

There is one point in the Millenarian theory which is good and true and which gives it its strength; and that is the well marked line which it draws between this age or world, and the age to come, and in insisting that that age must be introduced through the open manifestation of the Christ as King and Judge of men. Its mistake has been in viewing this appearing of Christ as an *ex abrupto* entrance upon a kingly office out of which He had been before kept; whereas Scripture views it as an open and signal manifestation of a sovereignty which began when God raised Him from the dead. The coming kingdom will not be so much a new kingdom, as the disclosure of a kingdom which already exists. So it is represented in the beautiful passage Is. xxv, 7–9.

"And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all peoples, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces. And it shall be said in that day; Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

In this passage the kingdom is viewed as lying just behind the veil. The clouds are brushed away and the Lord is at hand. So the New Testament uses the words "appearing," "revelation," "apocalypse," to describe the

character of this manifestation. It will be the disclosure of a dominion already in exercise, but to which men were blind. From this point of view we are able to reconcile all that Scripture teaches about the Lord's coming—as both a present fact, and a future reality. We are able to connect great providential events—such as the destruction of Jerusalem—with His parousia or presence. An absent and coming Christ does not take the place in our minds of a present Christ. And our eyes are opened to the tokens of His presence in us and in the world's affairs about us, instead of being on the alert for signs and portents in the heavens. We believe that in this principle of "manifestation" lies the true reconciliation between the two theories of the second coming, and the safeguard against the wild surmises and vaticinations which have brought the hope of the Lord's coming into disrepute.

2. But this view of the kingdom as already in progress and awaiting disclosure requires the belief also that the judgment of the world is not merely a crisis of the future, but is now going on. This also has its periods of special manifestation. Jesus warned His disciples that their own generation would witness one such. There will doubtless be a supreme manifestation of His work of judgment at the end of this age. But if the scales were taken from our eyes, we should see in all the events of human history and of each individual life this King and Judge of men, winnowing the chaff from the wheat, gathering the wheat into His garner, and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire. He is even now sorting men into sheep and goats and bestowing on some eternal life and inheritance in His kingdom, and consigning others to the eternal fire.

3. Resurrection must come under this same principle of progressive manifestation. If Christ is now ruling and judging the world, He must be also raising the dead, although all goes on behind the veil which is yet to be rent. This view removes all obscurity and confusion of thought about an intermediate state. Scripture always connects the life to come with resurrection. If the case of Dives be pointed to as an exception, we reply that a man cannot be looked upon as fully dead so long as the soul survives. The soul of the righteous man does not die, but is saved alive through the crisis of bodily death. The soul of the wicked man may be destroyed in hell beyond the death of the body (Matt. x. 28). In the parable of the rich man we see a soul in the process of destruction. But beyond this dissolution there is provided a resurrection. And all that can be properly regarded as life beyond the grave connects itself with this "hope and resurrection of the dead." There are intimations in Scripture that many captive dead were set free when Christ arose. They graced His triumph. St. Paul writes (2d Cor. v.) as if he did not expect to remain but, as it were, a moment in the bonds of death. "*Henceforth,*" he writes to Timothy, "there is laid up for me a crown." The word "henceforth" (the same that is used in Heb. x. 13) excludes long waiting. The early Church believed that her martyrs passed at once into life and blessedness. It is more reasonable and Scriptural to regard them as risen from the dead, than to suppose that such fullness of life is possible in a disembodied state. This so-called intermediate state must be either one of life or of death. If those in this condition are dead then they cannot have entered into life. If they are alive then they

must have been raised out of death. Putting all the evidence together, and remembering how uniformly Scripture connects the future life with resurrection (See 1 Cor. xv. 16–19, 21, 22; 2 Cor. v. 1–4; 1 Thes. iv. 14), we are compelled to believe either that all the dead are still asleep, awaiting resurrection, or that certain orders and ranks, at least, have been set free. And surely it accords with all that is revealed concerning our Lord's triumph over death, and with specific passages, to believe that this First-born One from the dead is already surrounded by many brethren, and that many "spirits in prison" who have served out their time of bondage have been released through their royal and priestly ministry.

4. This also implies that saints are already reigning with Christ behind the clouds which yet conceal Him. If this be so, they must have far more to do with the present progress of mankind in the ways of righteousness and peace than we have yet imagined. It would be folly to deny that the world is making progress, not only in the use of the creature, but in all that relates to humane and righteous dealing. There is a growing public sentiment in this direction to which both nations and individuals are obliged to conform. How much of this education of the race may be due to the unseen agency of those who have fought this battle of life through to victory and are now wearing its crown! And how much of the ministry of loving care and discipline which surrounds us in this life may be due to those who have had fellowship here with Christ in His suffering and self-denial, and who now have part in administering His protection and bounty to their kindred and fellows who are passing through these earthly scenes and

experiences. If this seems to any one fanciful and without warrant of Scripture, all we can reply is that it grows directly out of the fact, if it be a fact, that a part, at least, of the many sons for whom the Captain of our Salvation suffered, have already been made alive from the dead and entered into His glory. As kings and priests unto God, they cannot be idle spectators of this great drama of human affairs, of which their Lord is the centre; nor unconcerned for the welfare of their human brethren and kindred who are yet wrestlers on this arena.

This view of the kingdom of Christ as a present fact, and as the chief factor in human affairs, must lead us to interpret the symbolic language of Scripture which describes its approach as but the external drapery in which God has chosen to set before us the great facts which were to ensue upon the exaltation of His Son. Hence, while Jesus speaks of great commotions among the nations, and portents in the heavens and on the earth, as crowding together to herald His coming, He also assumes that the disciples to whom He spake would witness these things (Matt. xxiv. 33), and emphasizes the warning that they were to expect them in their own generation. So also St. Paul, in describing the descent of the Lord from heaven with trumpet shout to raise His sleeping saints, assumes that some of those to whom he wrote would be living when it occurred (1 Thes. iv.). The Apocalypse unfolds its visions before us with this repeated warning: "Behold, I come quickly." This uniform representation of the great events connected with Christ's coming as being close at hand compels us to reject that view of it which places it wholly in the future, and to regard it as having proceeded by successive stages

along the centuries. In a true and important sense, Christ has been manifesting Himself in each generation, as the human conditions were such as to prepare His way. And this, as we have seen, presupposes that He has also been judging the living and the dead, and that death and hades have at least begun to give up their captives.

And this suggests another point where we have made a distinct and an impregnable advance; and that is in perceiving a plain distinction between the "saints in Christ" and "the just." The former are an elect class, called of God into fellowship with His Son, and made to partake even now in His risen and triumphant life. The other class are the men who, under every form of religion, have lived in the fear of God and in kind and just relations with their fellow men, and yet who were ignorant or blind to the knowledge of God as revealed in Him. For such there is provided a resurrection of life (John v. 29.) They "go away unto life eternal" (Matt. xxv. 46.) That is, they are raised on to that plane of life along which they pass into life eternal. We have not space to repeat here the considerations which confirm this view, given in recent numbers. But nothing contributes more to a clear understanding and reconciliation of the various Scriptures which speak of human destiny, and of the relation which God sustains to all His creatures, than this view of the Church as an elect body in His great plan for the redemption of the human race from death, and that, under their priestly rule, all men are to be set free, each in his own order, and that for all right living and unselfish kindness toward others there is provided a recompense at the resurrection of the just, as all evil character must also be kept

under restraint and correction by a resurrection of judgment.

There are many other points at which we seek to hold ourselves open to increasing light. Whatever may be still unproved in the doctrine of evolution, we must not blind ourselves to the fact that light is to be expected from it upon the ways of God in creation, and even in redemption. Possibilities of new truth, and of new conquests over the forces that now shut us in in this material system, are being suggested, not only by science, but from that region where mind and matter meet, and which many are exploring under the name of "Christian Science." We know not what strange things God may be preparing to reveal to men in these last days. We only know that all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ, to be hereafter revealed with Him. Our place is cautiously and reverently to watch along all paths these signs of His appearing. And this interest in all unfolding truth must base itself upon the conviction that all true discovery is so much gain in the knowledge of God, and that by such increase the Church is to be brought out of her present state of confusion and weakness into that unity of faith and of knowledge which shall make her a fit vehicle for the presence and glory of the Lord, with which the earth is yet to be filled.

NO DIFFERENCE.

Our readers should bear in mind that the principle of redemptive resurrection applies equally well, whatever theory is held as to the time and nature of the resurrection. Some Christians think that none of the dead have yet been

raised—not even apostles and martyrs. And inasmuch as Scripture connects the hope of a future life with the hope of resurrection, they naturally hold that all the dead remain unconscious until they are raised. Others believe that resurrection takes place after a longer or shorter interval. And very many believe in a prolonged intermediate state. For ourselves we cannot escape the conviction that life beyond the grave is revived with resurrection and is dependent upon it. This does not exclude the thought that the unsaved soul may survive for a period the death of the body, before it also is destroyed in hell. But St. Paul's declaration that if the dead rise not, then they which have fallen asleep in Christ have perished, is of itself sufficient to establish the connection between the life to come and resurrection. We are far, however, from believing that the saints of all ages are yet sleeping in death. Scripture plainly teaches that the believer becomes at once a partaker in Christ's risen life. How then can he remain for centuries under the power of death! Is it likely that His victory over death remains so long void of its fruits?

The appearance of "many bodies of the saints" after His resurrection (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53) furnishes at least one instance in proof that the deliverance of the dead through His triumph is not wholly an event of the future. And if there be one such instance, why may not a multitude of captives (Eph. iv. 8) have been delivered since His ascension to glory? A friend once remarked to us that if this be so, David could not have been one of them, because St. Peter declares at Pentecost that "he is not ascended into the heavens." The Greek verb, however, is in the past tense; hence the New Version reads, "For

David ascended not into the heavens." The passage therefore does not decide that David was then still sleeping among the dead.

Nor does the passage in 2d Timothy ii, 18 contradict this view. We there read of a certain Hymenæus and Philetus "who concerning the truth have erred, saying that resurrection (the revised Greek text is without the article), is past already." The best critics agree that the reference here is to that germinal Gnostic heresy to which the apostle also refers in I Cor. xv, where he asks "How say among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" The later Gnosticism denied the resurrection of the body, and asserted that men find in this life their resurrection in the rising of the soul from the death of ignorance to the light of knowledge. The germs of this denial existed already in the church. The heresy of Hymenæus and Philetus, therefore, seems to have been of this sort which robbed the Christian faith of its grand hope of the resurrection of the dead. This is the very reverse of our teaching, which magnifies this hope.

See Conybeare and Howson's comment on this passage in *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, Vol. II, p. 478, and the note from Tertullian quoted in Vol. I, p. 451.

Christ's Kingdom.—It is evident also that if it be conceded that the resurrection of the dead be now going on under the administration of the ascended Christ, we must view His kingdom as already begun, although awaiting its time of *manifestation*. We must regard also His judgment of the world, and of individual lives, as now in progress,

according to His word that it should begin to come to pass before that generation passed away. This does not exclude the idea of a future supreme crisis of judgment. But it leads us to connect things present and things to come as parts of one administration which began with Christ's victory over death. It suggests also that risen saints are now sharers with Him in this administration. We are coming more firmly to the conviction that some earnest Christians need less to be straining their eyes to catch the vision of the coming Christ, and need rather an opening of their eyes to see the mountains round about us filled with the encamping hosts of a present reigning Christ. It is true that we are exhorted earnestly to look forward to the day when this glory shall be revealed. But we must learn to view that day as a true *apocalypse*—an unveiling of a splendor that already exists, rather than an assumption of an office from which the Christ has been hitherto excluded. We read in Isaiah twenty-fifth, that in this mountain, that is the established Kingdom of the Messiah, shall the Lord of hosts destroy the face of the covering which is cast over all people; and it shall be said in that day, Lo! this is our God. We have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. Here we have precisely this idea—not the bursting upon the world of a new sovereignty, but the revelation of one that already exists, although administered from behind the clouds. And this suggests why Christians are exhorted to hasten that day. They are the chosen seed through whom the glory of this kingdom is to shine forth. They are therefore to prepare their hearts for it—to see that they become fit vessels for it. That new era will be ushered in by new and striking proofs that we "are the

temple of God." And hence the supreme duty of the Church in her corporate character to seek after that unity of the spirit in the bond of peace which shall manifest to the world that she is one with Christ, and that her members constitute one organic body in Him. Whether this be done by a process of sifting, or by a mighty baptism from above that shall lift her warring factions and worldly adherents on to the high level of a true spiritual union, it must yet be done before the world will believe. May God hasten the day!

THE OUTCASTS.

In one of the most beautiful of the Psalms—the 147th—we read, among other restoring and healing blessings which Jehovah has in store for His people, that "He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel." Ordinarily this is regarded as a prediction of a future gathering and conversion of some distant generation of Jews in the latter days—a mere moiety of the whole house of Israel. How much more pregnant of meaning, and how much more touching and beautiful the promise, when we learn to regard the "outcasts" as the captive dead of His people—the multitudes who for their sins were sent down into captivity to death and hell! These are the "perished ones" for whom His great trumpet of deliverance is to be blown (Is. xxvii. 13). Nothing short of this will fulfil these beautiful words, "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel: He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." And this gives an explanation for the thought in the next stanza: "He

telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names." Twice in Genesis, when God was binding Himself in solemn oath to Abraham to make him and his seed a blessing to all the families of the earth, He appealed to the unnumbered stars of heaven in proof of His power to fulfil His promise, and also as illustrating the multitudes who were to be included in its blessing. Surely the few outcasts of some future Jewish race cannot meet the terms of this promise. How slow we are to take in the large measures of the grace of our God! The starry hosts—countless to us—are all known and numbered by Him. And the numberless dead—lost to us—are all named and enrolled by Him. His vast universe is big enough to hold them all. And all these outcasts He gathereth together. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order: "They that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment." But it is better to be gathered even under judgment, and only within the outer circles of His great Kingdom of life, than to remain an outcast in the land of death.

THE PROPHECY OF CAIAPHAS.—From this point of view we discover also a new meaning in the unconscious prophecy of Caiaphas, uttered before the council convened to consider the effect upon the people of the miracle of Jesus in raising Lazarus from the dead. "Being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that

were scattered abroad." (Jno. xi. 52.) There seems to be a reference here to Isaiah xlix., in which it is foretold that the Messiah would not only raise up the tribes of Jacob and restore the preserved of Israel, but be the salvation of God to the ends of the earth, bringing the prisoners out of darkness into a place where they should hunger and thirst no more (vs. 8–10), and delivering His captive people from the mighty and terrible one (vs. 24,25). We have frequently shown that no explanation of this class of passages is half so satisfactory as that which makes deliverance from captivity to death the ultimate blessing promised. And thus we are able to include among the children of God who are scattered abroad, who were to be gathered together through the death of one man dying for the people, the outcasts in the land of death whom it was His mission to set free.

BUT A SINGLE TEXT.

It is safe to say that the current doctrine of everlasting punishment rests upon but one single text,—"These shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matt. xxv, 46). The other texts relied upon admit of another explanation. We have shown how easily they adapt themselves to the view that the destruction of which they speak is of this present gift of embodied life, and lies this side of resurrection. But this text, we are told, is too plain and unequivocal to yield to any such treatment. "There it stands—Jesus Himself said it—the punishment is everlasting."

At the recent Manchester Church Congress, the Rev. Sir

G. Cox suggested a method to get rid of the force of this passage. His principle of exegesis seems to be this: Any single reported saying of Christ which does not harmonize with the general character of His life and teaching must be stricken out as spurious. This would be an easy way indeed to dispose of a hard passage. We cannot endorse it: and yet in how many minds has the question arisen, "How can it be that the merciful Son of Man, who taught men that, in order to be perfect as their Heavenly Father is perfect, they must be kind to the evil and unthankful, forgive their enemies as they hope to be forgiven, and whose dying prayer for His murderers was "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," could from His throne of judgment consign countless multitudes to endless suffering in an eternal fire? This principle is akin to that given in a recent lecture by the late Rev. Dr. A. A. Hodge, who says, "It is never safe to rest a great doctrine upon a single passage." Such a doctrine must find its warrant in that it is more or less directly implied in the whole document.

It is evident, however, that there is danger in the Rev. Sir Cox's principle, as it yields too much authority to our human judgment to decide what Christ should have said.

This thing, however, may be said with regard to the claim put forth for this passage. There is too much evidence that the eschatological teaching of Jesus was tampered with by early transcribers of the sacred text, and in the interest of that priestly domination over the souls of men which the church afterwards acquired. We gave in our last number evidence sufficient to raise at least a sus-

picion that the word "punishment" was substituted for the word "fire." The two earliest Italic versions gave *ignem* where the Vulgate reads *supplicium.* If the word were "eternal fire," as in the 41st verse, then the text accommodates itself easily to our view that the sentence is of living men, (not once dead and risen), to a destruction which *precedes* their resurrection. The circumstance that the fire is called eternal would not prove the endless preservation of the sufferers in the fire, any more than the mention of unquenchable fire as that by which the Messiah would burn up the chaff proves that the chaff would be kept burning forever. Other instances of tampering, however, are less doubtful than is this. On the authority of the late revision we must reject the word "judgment" from Mark iii: 29 and read "sin." Some later copyists inserted *kolasin,* so as to make it read "shall be in danger of eternal punishment." In Mark ix: 43–49 we have the words "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" inserted three times where the revisers tell us they belong but once. Again, Mark xvi: 16, "He that believeth not shall be damned," occurs in that closing part of the gospel which is not found in the two oldest Greek manuscripts, and which was probably added by a later hand. Add to these inaccuracies in the text the fact that our English translators made "judgment" in this class of passages the equivalent of "damnation," and we have good reason for suspecting that the current doctrine has had a human bolstering beyond what was warranted by the original text. At all events, since we find that all the Old Testament promises look forward to a redemption of the race from death through a resurrection, we shall be doing violence to

the first principles of correct interpretation, if we allow a single passage like this to set aside this great redemption hope, and to convert this rescue of the dead, to all but the elect, into the unspeakable disaster of their introduction to an endless despair.

THEOLOGICAL BURDENS.

The heavy burdens which the current doctrine of man's future is obliged to carry are thus felicitously stated by the Rev. Wm. Barrows in the September No. of the *Andover Review*:

It seems to be a frigid and heartless proceeding to go to the blackboard with this problem of salvation, yet perhaps not more so than to consign the vastly major part of the human family to an endless woe by a declarative logic, and one rhetorical and theological sentence in a summary of Christian doctrine.

According to the doctrinal basis of a portion of the Evangelical Church, three-fourth's of the world's population is failing of the great salvation through a want of the personal knowledge of Christ and of an opportunity to accept His plan of redemption. These three-fourths constitute a living generation of ten hundred and fifty millions, of whom thirty-six millions a year pass over into that momentous hereafter. * * * But this estimate is based on the present extent of Christianity as obtained in the nineteenth century. As we trace the ages back, the Christian area of the world diminishes, till we come to Antioch, where a few first took the Christian name. During these nineteen ages the great human host has been without the knowledge of Christ, and without the opportunity of filling the conditions of salvation which are asserted. Except a scattering few, the human family has been called a lost race. And this has been asserted, not

in phrase and metaphor, but in plain, awful fact, as when it is said that a wrecked ship's crew have gone to the bottom. Back of the advent of Christ we add forty centuries of life and death for the redeemed race, and at the same time very narrowly contract the area through which a knowledge of this plan of redemption is made known with any practical definiteness. * * * But the great prehistoric races of the old world must be included in this range of thought, and America, before the days of Ericsson and Columbus, must be heard from. The dead and buried world must be heard, which dragged in slow length along, like the days of creation, the Stone Age, and the Bronze Age and the Iron Age of the human family. Moreover, the discoveries and demonstrations of natural science are straining the bands of the Adamic chronology to insert decades of thousands of years, where scholars in Biblical studies have given simply thousands. There is a combination of facts tending to show that the real human race is vastly older than the commonly received historic human race. This extension of its area to populations not conceived of by those who received the last command of our Lord to preach the Gospel in all the world, and this elongation of the human era far back of its commonly received beginning, add immensely to the scope and mightiness of this popular question of eschatology. If in this wide scope over all the continents and centuries, historic and pre-historic, we go abroad and rigidly demand evidence of regeneration and of an intelligent and personal acceptance of Christ as a Saviour, in order to salvation on the theory of the Synod of Dort and of the Westminster Assembly, we add very grave elements to the magnitude and anxieties of this question.

Moreover, as three-fourths of the human race are now non-Christian, the natural gain on the pagan side is as three to one on the Christian side. The number of the heathen by birth each year is immensely in excess of the conversions to Christ among them through Christian missions.

The proportion of the lost to the saved in the human race, under a system of redemption, and according to the traditional creed, has raised this question of human destiny under the Gospel to a very profound interest. It is not so much the Church which has raised the question, as that the question has siezed the Church.

These are indeed heavy burdens under which the Church has been staggering, until the demand for relief in the way of a more reasonable and Scriptural eschatology is irresistible. Would that she could see that relief at hand in the principle of redemptive resurrection! All these difficulties vanish in the light of it. The Bible becomes a new book, and the claim of the Gospel to be glad tidings of great joy is made good.

WHAT IS HELL?

The Philadelphia papers gave a report of a recent trial before one of our Judges in which a lawyer who had been confined in an asylum for the insane brought suit for his liberty and ably conducted his own case. We refer to the matter simply because we were struck by his description of what he had suffered in confinement. He was in the habit of placing at the top of his letters to friends with whom he was allowed to correspond, "In Hell."

We have often set before our readers this idea of hell as a subjective experience. But it is also an objective fact. This unfortunate man found hell in his surroundings; but he carried hell also in his own breast. Where there is perfect peace of mind and repose on God, the soul can escape hell and find heaven in the midst of the most dire circumstances. But the conception is a true one. All sin

is lawlessness (1 John iii. 5, R. V.), and lawlessness, or anarchy in human nature, is hell.

We have defined hell, or the hades of Scripture, to be that prison house of death into which sin casts its victims, where they remain bound until their resurrection. This is the objective side of it. Hell is a place. But it is also a state. The forces of evil which work in man this destruction are active now. They bring him into present torment and chains. They fetter him in bondage to evil passions or imperious ambitions. They lash him with scorpions. Men in this life may be thus truly shut up in walls which they cannot overleap and subjected to taskmasters whose yoke they cannot throw off. These walls and these torments are hell. The man is in process of destruction by a worm that dieth not and a fire that cannot be quenched. And unless he be pulled out of the fire, the destruction must go on until the body is dissolved in death and the soul, like that of the rich man, goes into torment whose issue must be also its destruction. For, as Jesus assures us, God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

We must not, however, regard this penalty as wholly a thing of the future, or disconnect it from the operation of laws in man's being which are active all around us and in us. Men may be cast into hell this side the grave. The anarchy of sin breeds hell even here. And the warning comes to us now as of a present danger, that it is better for us to cut off an offending member than to have the whole body cast into quenchless fire. We firmly believe that in these words Jesus did not mean to bring to view a future lake of material fire, much less one that should follow a post-resurrection judgment day several thousand years dis-

tant. He was speaking of a present danger—of a subjective condition into which men might pass now through unmortified sin, and the end of which they would find to be destruction. Men all around us are in hells from which they need immediate rescue. We have been in such ourselves. And indeed it is disciples especially who were warned by these words. Some of us must needs be saved "so as by fire." Some of those around us, even of our fellow Christians, need to be pulled out of the fire (Jude 23). Hell is a pit down into which the merely natural man is being dragged by uniform, irresistible laws; yea, he is already there; for, if Scripture affirms that the sinner abideth in death, it most also be true that he abides in hell. For death and hell are twin partners in man's captivity.

But, thanks be to God, we have a Mighty Deliverer in one who is anointed to preach deliverance to the captives and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound. And as He was sent from the Father, so now He sends us. We need not wait for opportunities to preach to "spirits in prison" beyond the grave, although a great work doubtless awaits there the church of the first born; but we may find hell's captives all about us upon whom the wrath of God now abides, and who need present salvation from it, as well as from the wrath to come. All such Jesus Christ is able to save, even unto the uttermost.

We thank God for that word "uttermost." It shows that His ability passes all limits of space or time, and proves the falsity of the idea which has so long held possession of the church, that death fixes a limit and puts a stop to any exercise of His redeeming grace beyond it.

NOTES ON CURRENT TOPICS.

The Independent, of Nov. 22, contains a review of the correspondence between Dorner and Martensen, by Prof. Chas. A Briggs, which betrays more sympathy with the New Theology which Dorner did so much to shape than we should expect to find in a Presbyterian theological professor. He says:

"Jesus taught that the only unpardonable sin was the sin against the Holy Ghost. Dorner and Martensen agree with most of the great Continental theologians of the century that this statement of Jesus is not confined to this life, but embraces also the middle states. They recognized, therefore, the possibility of repentance and redemption in the middle states to all whose ability in repentance had not been destroyed by personal sin against the Holy Spirit. The Gospel offer of a Saviour must be made and definitely rejected before eternal damnation is earned. There is progress in sin as well as in holiness in the middle state. It should be observed again that this view does not spring from the Arminian doctrine of Probation, but from the ethical views of Dorner and Martensen and their conception of the ethical development of man on the one side in sin until the unpardonable sin is committed; on the other in holiness until the likeness of Christ is attained, a development which in neither case can be limited by death.

These letters are full of suggestive thoughts and quickening sentences in the entire range of Christian religion, doctrine, morals and life. We shall conclude with an item that will interest every American. Dorner wrote to Martensen in 1870, just before starting to New York to the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, that he believed in a hundred years America would have a theology of its own that would perhaps be in advance of that of Europe. This idea of Dorner will be realized if the young men of America learn to value such theologians as Dorner and Martensen who are truly conservative and catholic, and yet irenic and mediating, and who do not fear to be speculative and progressive.

We find no evidence in Scripture for Dorner's "middle state," but we do find abundant evidence of a "hope of the dead" through and after resurrection.

What we fail to see, however, is why a church which allows

one of its authorized teachers to thus speak of Dorner, and to recommend him as an example to the young men of America, could not give tolerance to our doctrine of the future, which, to say the least, is less harmful, and which is no speculation, but drawn out of the very marrow of Scripture.

PROF. ELY, of John Hopkins University, has been reading lately a paper before an association of Baptist ministers, urging "that ministers should give greater attention to material and social conditions, to the wrongs suffered by the poor, to their lack of the means of advancement, and generally to the practical affairs of this life, and less to the prospects of a life to come."

It is a marked feature of church activity in our day that far more attention is being paid to the improvement of the material conditions of their fellow men than formerly. But the hint that this can be properly done only by giving less attention to the prospects of a life to come, is wholly misleading. If the church has failed here, it is because she has misunderstood the relation between this life and the life to come. She has held a theory that there was very little relation between the good deeds done and the good character formed in this life, and the future welfare of a man, unless he became a regenerate saint. She has not understood the distinction between the recompense of such a life at "the resurrection of the just" and the crown of life henceforth awaiting the Christian. She has therefore been handicapped in her humanitarian efforts by this secret conviction that all such efforts carry over with them no abiding results into the life to come, but that the life not rooted and grounded in Christ must go out in darkness, with no recompense and no recovery. If she would only open her eyes to the true character of the Gospel provision of another life for men beyond the grave, she would make a much more proper adjustment of this matter. She would perceive how God's resurrection harvest must gather in all the good that may be wrought into any life, and that no gain toward righteousness and symmetry is ever

lost; and so the imputation of Prof. Ely that the best interests of both cannot be properly looked after at the same time, would be seen to be utterly groundless.

THERE is one irrefutable proof that the apostles did not believe that all the men of their day who had not heard of or believed in Christ would be eternally lost. They looked for and desired the return of Christ in their own day, which, on that view, would bring in the day of judgment and end all hope. How could they desire to have the door of hope thus speedily closed against all the world? No; they believed that that great event would open more widely a door of hope out of even the valley of death.

TESTIMONY OF AN EXPERT.—Mr. William Tallack, secretary of the Howard Association, London, has recently published a work of much practical value, entitled "Penological and Preventive Principles," in which many questions relating to the dimunition of crime, pauperism and intemperance, are discussed at length, and with great ability. When dealing with the human administration of justice, Mr. Tallack embraces the opportunity to refer to Divine principles bearing upon the punishment of sin.

We copy from *The Messenger* the following extracts from his book:—

"Perhaps one of the chief and most widely prevalent obstacles to the extension of a world-wide, willing reverence to the Divine government has been furnished by the promulgation of extreme and unscriptural dogmas in relation to a presumed '*endless torment*' of the wicked, as distinguished from a fair and reasonable interpretation of the whole scope and spirit of the New Testament. . . . Only the worst human miscreants would, if it were possible, deliberately roast alive, for a few hours, an offending dog, cat, or even a tiger. How, then, is it credible, that the God and Father of infinite justice and love will torture any of His poor family, to say nothing of the great majority of them, in agonizing flames of fire, for ever and ever?

"This awful dogma has generally and increasingly failed as a

popular deterrent and restraint from evil. It has even suggested an object for the most common and contemptuous forms of swearing and scoffing amongst the worst classes of mankind. It has revolted the hearts and consciences of the best men and women; and, as authoritatively promulgated by some churches, it has driven multitudes of the most earnest and thoughtful persons into infidelity.

"But, in particular, it has produced most mischievous and demoralizing influences, by leading to reactionary views in the opposite extreme. . . . Hence, for example, the ultra-Calvinism of New England has promoted, in the same region, a pernicious activity of an extreme and one-sided 'Universalism,' which ignores both the inviolability of God's law, and its indispensable vindication, through the incarnation and self-sacrifice of the Highest in Christ, as His own condescending manifestation in this world of humanity. This system of moral negation encourages vicious laxity and irreverence. . . . .

"Augustine, of Hippo, who is so specially responsible for the general and authoritative diffusion of the dogma of 'eternal torment,' exemplified in his own conduct its hardening and demoralizing tendency; as, for instance, in his abandonment of the affectionate mother of his child, his virtual wife in the Divine sight. But later on, when the heart of the priesthood became, in a large degree, petrified by these rigid teachings, as to the general and final reprobation of mankind, and when the clergy, as a body, became more or less indurated in feeling through the operation of their own enforced disobedience to the natural and Divine law of marriage, these perversions of doctrine and practice culminated in the awful Inquisition and its extreme blasphemies against Christ. It was no mere poetic licence which prompted Sir Walter Scott, for example, to depict, in "Marmion," the mode of death inflicted, by a brutalized sacerdotalism, upon poor Constance at Holy Isle. For to this day, especially in various parts of the European Continent, remain the sickening signs and incontrovertible evidences of the revolting cruelties long inflicted upon myriads of the very best men and women, by the special teachers of the dogma of eternal torment. They sought, as far as practicable, to illustrate and initiate its agonies in their own secret chambers, subterranean dungeons and shambles of human butchery.

"Still and abundantly the traveller meets with visible evidences of the immeasurable agony, which, for long ages, characterized the priestly administrations of the rack, the stake, the red-hot pincers, the wallings-up and buryings alive, the scaldings to death, the mutilations, the impalements of the innocent upon sharp spikes and knives in dark, deep pits, or

between the crushing arms of "the Virgin's embrace," in those hideous dens of appalling wickedness. The black dungeon, with depth beneath depth, in many feudal castles, tends to produce a shudder in the observer. The torture chambers of mediæval civilian administration, as still to be seen at Nuremberg, reveal worse proofs of cruelty. But the most appalling and most numerous evidences of penal or persecuting atrocity, are associated with the ecclesiastical Inquisitions of Spain and Italy. These especially tended to brutalize the prison administration of Europe for centuries; and, indeed, their indirect influence is still visible in some of the establishments, institutions, and practices connected with the world's Penology. It would need but brief time to demonstrate that these horrors of the Inquisition, and of ancient secret imprisonment, were amongst the logical consequences of the dogma of 'eternal torment,' united with the assumption of the right of persecution for differences of religious opinion. For the same influences were manifest in Protestant professors of the same belief; as in Henry the Eighth, in whose reign 60,000 persons were executed; and in many Calvinists and Puritans in so far as their comparatively limited powers of authority enabled them to act similarly. Thus, Calvin himself promoted the burning of Servetus; Puritans hanged Quakers in New England; Scotch bigots, of the iconoclastic Knoxian era, and later, manifested such a hard and persecuting spirit as to lead Milton to declare that "New Presbyter is but old priest writ large;" and that grimly pious Calvinistic leader, Dr. Cotton Mather, superintended the execution, in one day, of five unfortunate wretches charged with witchcraft. But all such professed Christianity was diametrically opposed to the example and teaching of the Divine Founder of the Church.

"In our more enlightened age, perhaps the strongest disproof of the dogma of 'eternal torment' is afforded by the lives of those very persons, as a class, who most emphatically profess to believe it. For these, as with one voice, nullify and contradict in action their own profession. They enjoy life and prosperity as cheerfully as any other persons, and participate, with as keen a zest as any, in the comforts, luxuries, and festivities of existence. They happily marry, and beget large families; whilst some of the most prominent amongst their number achieve a notoriety even as pulpit-jesters. But such easy, joyous existence is utterly incompatible with any genuine belief in the general consignment of mankind to hopelessly unending burnings. None who really held that doctrine could live in criminal disregard of all the souls in such tremendous peril. Yet only at rare intervals has the world seen some honest and ap-

proximately consistent advocate of that view, whose life confirmed his opinion; as for instance, such zealous souls as Brainerd, Carey, and Martyn, quitting life's ease and rest to agonize, till the last breath, for the salvation of a world, whose Divine Disposer, even these good men virtually held to be less merciful than themselves.

"This dogma is now increasingly rejected by the churches, and especially denied, in practice, by its own professors. It has flagrantly failed to become an effectual moral restraint, either from sin against God, or from crime against man. On the contrary, it has led millions to blaspheme the former, and thousands to torment the latter."

THE BOSTON COUNCIL.—It is pitiful to read through the account of the examination of the Rev. W. H. Noyes, before a council in which some of the foremost men among the Congregationalists sat, and to discover that neither Mr. Noyes nor his examiners seem ever to have discerned the true Scripture ground of hope for the dead, which he still feels that he must cherish. There is no allusion to the hope of resurrection as having anything to do with this problem, and for all the use these wise men made of it, it might as well have been left out of Scripture. Their eyes are holden through bondage to traditional notions of the final judgment.

Mr. Noyes said, "as to future things, I believe that the supreme fact revealed is the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory to judgment. Christ's judgment will not be arbitrary, but in righteousness, according to His gospel. This judgment, I believe, is final. The wicked shall forever depart from God, but the righteous shall forever live with God. I believe that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God, and each one of us shall give account of himself to God, whose servant each one is, and before whom each standeth or falleth."

The fatal defect here is:

1. In referring our Lord's words about future judgment to a remote assize, whereas He carefully insisted that He should begin His work of judgment with His exaltation to be both Lord and Christ—before that generation passed away.

2. In overlooking the most important factor in His work as

Judge, which He declares to be the resurrection of all the dead (see John, v. 22-29), "that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." Scripture places all its hope for the dead in the hope of their resurrection. Mr. Noyes fixes it in an intermediate state before resurrection. He overlooks the redemptive character of this change, and places all possible changes for the better before it. To the wicked, death and destruction lie before this change. Judgment, as a sentence, precedes it; as discipline and restraint, it follows it. But resurrection is essentially the opening of the prison doors of hell to them who had been bound in it. It is not risen men, but living nations, to whom the Judge says, "Depart ye cursed." It is this mislocation of judgment, and this denial of any redemptive feature in the provision to raise the unjust, that throws these brethren into confusion upon this whole subject.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

From the numerous cordial letters we have received, approving of our purpose to continue this magazine, we have room for only partial extracts:

From a Congregational clergyman:

Thanks be unto God for the tidings this morning in your Dec. No., that the Magazine is to be continued another year. I was just about to write you in order to speak of that most suggestive article in the November No., on the Resurrection of the Just. I now enclose five dollars to cover my annual subscription, and my mite toward supplying deficiencies. Your present article on Robert Elsmere, and the Note on *Nerve of Missions*, are close to the point. So is the article, "Our Lord's use of the term Fire." That the blessed Spirit may teach and support you, is my earnest prayer.

From a clergyman in Lausanne, Switzerland:

I read monthly your WORDS OF RECONCILIATION with great sympathy and interest. I find it most valuable, and I hope it

will be continued. I beg to enclose my subscription for the next year. Should you, to my great regret, discontinue your publication, my contribution might be used by you for the spreading of the truth, which we think so urgent and vital.

From a subscriber in Princeton:

I am thankful you so bravely go on with your noble mission in our dear Lord's service. You will reap a sure reward here, as well as in the ages to come. I read your precious words, and repeat them to many friends, who have never an answer, but I suppose, *fear* to believe. I own and read with delight your "Mystery of Creation and of Man." No volume in my library gives me such grand views and satisfactory ideas.

From a College President in New England:

I enclose one dollar for a year's subscription. You are doing a good work in disturbing a repose in the Church, which is a close counterfeit of death.

From an aged friend in Oregon:

Had my physical health been equal to my desires, you would have received from my hands a number of subscriptions to your precious little monthly, but I have to be satisfied to do what good I can in sending forth my own copy. How slow of heart we are to believe all that has been predicted in relation to Christ as Redeemer, Priest and King!

From a Christian husband and wife in Massachusetts:

Dear Brother in Christ. We are exceedingly rejoiced to know that you intend to continue to publish WORDS OF RECONCILIATION. We believe God has called you to that special work, and we wish to express our thankfulness to you and to Him for the light that has dawned upon us through the reading of your pamphlet. The Bible is a new book to us, and we see Christ a mightier Saviour than had ever entered our conception. No wonder much people in heaven sing, "Hallelujah, salvation and glory and honor and power, unto the Lord our God;" and we can echo back the chorus from our hearts.

From a friend in Oneida County, New York:

I send you in this five dollars which, small as is the gift, will help a little to preach the Resurrection of Hope. I have read

your "Mystery of Creation" and the "Fire of God's Anger," and read regularly the WORDS OF RECONCILIATION. I believe you read and interpret the Scriptures rightly in regard to the resurrection. A resurrection which means hope beyond the grave for the human race explains not only the importance which is attached to Christ's resurrection in the New Testament, but it also solves the mystery of Creation by making it but the first stage in the discipline of God's creatures, until in the end the fire of His anger—burning always *against* the sin, while His love burns *for* the sinner—shall have burned up the last vestige of chaff and left only wheat for His garner. I thank you for the light and joy which your labor of love has brought to me, and I trust that God will make you happy and strong for His work.

From a lady friend in New York:

Allow me to express my gratification that you have decided to continue the Magazine, and to enclose my check for three subscriptions; the balance to be used in sending the Magazine to any clergymen you think would be glad to have it, who are unable to subscribe.

I want to thank you for your excellent review of the much talked of novel. You have covered one or two points I have not seen noticed before. A question of *fact* comes up in my mind: Does any one know in *real* life a Robert Elsmere? Is there so saintly, so self-sacrificing, so devout a man—one who is living for Christ and his brethren—who is a mere theist?

"MAY her ministers ever be men whom no earthly advantages will tempt to sign what they do *not* believe, and no earthly loss will deter from avowing what they do believe."—*From Dr. Guthrie's address when elected Moderator of the Free Church Assembly*, 1862.